

SOVIET COMMUNIST STATEMENT CONTRADICTS
CHINESE COMMUNIST CLAIM THAT ELIMINATION
OF CAPITALISTS IN CHINA IS PEACEFUL

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The Chinese Communists have long tried to foster the myth that China's bourgeoisie (including small shopkeepers) welcomed the change to a "socialist" economy and that they were not coerced in the process. One purpose of this deception is to make the Peking regime more acceptable both to middle-class overseas Chinese and to sympathetic Asians. The Russian Communists, however, have given the lie to these Chinese claims of peaceful transition to socialism in the attached article printed in the theoretical journal Kommunist in October 1956.

By pointing out how force or the constant threat of its use has been employed by the Chinese Communists over the past few years, the CPSU has been able to restate its theory that the peaceful growth of capitalism into socialism is impossible, and has done this without at the same time stripping the CCP of its claim to orthodoxy. This works out very well for the purposes of the CPSU, but destroys the basis of the Chinese propaganda campaign of the last year about the happy capitalists who are becoming servants of the state.

Chinese Claims

The Chinese Communists have claimed to be partners of China's "patriotic" bourgeoisie. They have cited as evidence the fact that the changeover of the Chinese economy to socialism proceeded gradually until the "socialist high tide" of January 1956 converted the remaining private businesses in China into joint state-private enterprises on the orders of the State Council. This achievement was accompanied by the launching of a major propaganda effort to convince the world that the capitalists were clamoring for the state to assume control of their businesses. Dispatches from Peking told of capitalists dancing in the streets in celebration. Articles appeared in China Reconstructs and People's China, multi-language propaganda publications with wide distribution outside China describing how the capitalists "flocked to apply" for joint operation of their enterprises.

Speaking at the National People's Congress in June, 1956, economist and CCP Politburo member Chen Yun said:

"Except for a few border areas, all capitalist industry and commerce has now come under joint State-private ownership. . . It is not the first time in the world that private ownership has

been changed to Socialist ownership, but its transformation by so peaceful a way with industrialists and traders throughout the country accepting the transformation in such high spirits, is an event unprecedented in history."*

Russian Dictum on the Necessity of Struggle

Kommunist devoted a 6,000 word article to the refutation of the idea that the "so-called theory of the peaceful growth of capitalism into socialism" has been confirmed by the experience of China. This theory is said to proceed from "reformist" positions and to constitute an attempt to adulterate Marxist-Leninist revolutionary teachings. It makes the error of ignoring the continuance of the class struggle.

In reconciling the Chinese experience to Soviet theories of the transformation to socialism, Kommunist points out the mass campaigns waged against the bourgeoisie in the seven years of the existence of the CPR. These campaigns are listed as follows:

- 1) In 1950, the CPR conducted a "decisive struggle" against the bourgeoisie for the stabilization of prices. This struggle reached "great bitterness and sharpness".

* Stalin recognized the possibility of "voluntary" concession on the part of the capitalists if they were in a hopeless position. The Chinese applied this cynical doctrine by demonstrating to the bourgeoisie through mass campaigns that opposition to the regime was futile and dangerous. Stalin expressed his position as follows:

"Of course, in the remote future, if the proletariat is victorious in the most important capitalist countries, and if the present capitalist encirclement is replaced by a Socialist encirclement, a 'peaceful' path of development is quite possible for certain capitalist countries, whose capitalists, in view of the 'unfavourable' international situation, will consider it expedient 'voluntarily' to make substantial concessions to the proletariat..."

J. Stalin, "Foundations of Leninism," in Problems of Leninism, page 45, para. 4. (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1947.)

- 2) In 1952, the Five-Anti campaign, or Wu Fan, was conducted (on the basis of very vague charges) against alleged "bourgeois crimes" of bribery, tax evasion, waste of state means, unconscientious implementation of government directives, and mishandling of secret economic information--categories designed to make it possible to try and to punish almost any businessman. This campaign was conducted on the basis of open and secret denunciations of businessmen by their employees, associates, and even members of their families. Many alleged offenders were sent off to labor camps; others fled or committed suicide. Those who remained found themselves not only without cash reserves because of the severe fines levied, but permanently reduced to the status of virtual civil servants under government control.
- 3) In 1953, when the CPR started on its first Five Year Plan and the socialist transformation of agriculture and capitalist economy, the government again met with bitter resistance from the village and town bourgeoisie.
- 4) In 1955, a renewed drive against "counterrevolutionaries" was undertaken which, like the previous three campaigns, involved both the use and the threat of force against the bourgeoisie.
- 5) Kommunist also underscored the fact that the "deplorable fate of the Russian bourgeoisie", who resisted the Communists after the revolution, was a constant reminder to the Chinese businessmen of the dangers of open resistance to the regime.

Kommunist points out that theoretically, and therefore in practice as well, the use of force is indispensable during the transformation from a capitalist to a socialist economy. Referring to the Chinese campaigns against the bourgeoisie, the article states:

"If under these conditions the ruling Communist Party had left things to themselves, and desisted from stifling the bourgeoisie, the struggle between the capitalist and socialist roads of development would inevitably have ended with the victory of the former."

The Russians have thus admitted and approved the use of force in Chinese socialization, and at the same time have made it plain that the "counterrevolutionary" campaigns involved terroristic oppression, not of criminals, but of the Chinese middle class.

The 1956 Socialist "High Tide"

The Chinese propaganda campaign claiming a peaceful transformation to socialist economy emphasizes the fact that during the rapid changeover to joint state-private enterprise of January 1956, it was not necessary to make mass arrests of dissenting businessmen. This Russian article makes it clear that the bourgeoisie had been so intimidated by the biennial campaigns of terror directed against them that they did not dare oppose the loss of their enterprises. Li Wei-han, director of the United Front Department of the CCP Central Committee, obliquely admitted that this was true in a speech to the National Peoples Congress in June 1956:

"It is well known that because of these (evils), the working class under the leadership of the Communist Party and the People's Government, carried out the historic struggle of Wu Fan [five-anti] which educated not only the mass of workers and Government functionaries, but also the bourgeoisie. By this struggle, the bourgeoisie was enabled to get a profound understanding of the danger of their "five evils" to the Motherland and the people and of the necessity of accepting the leadership of the working class and embarking on the road of socialism. It is precisely for this reason that it has become possible to adopt a more moderate form of Socialist transformation today." [Emphasis supplied.]

It is not difficult to understand why, after living through four successive campaigns against them, the surviving members of the middle class decided to enter the joint state-private enterprises without active resistance.

In analyzing the motivations of the Russians in undermining the Chinese propaganda theme of "peaceful" transformation to socialism, the two faces of the present Russian tactical line become apparent. Since the 20th CPSU Congress the policy has been to woo the neutral states away from cooperation with the Western powers with the slogans of "peace" and "peaceful coexistence". The ultimate objective of the Communist movement, however, remains the same. The problem the Russian leaders face is how to lull the non-Communists to sleep with the talk of peace, and at the same time keep the Communist Party members awake in the struggle for world revolution. The CPSU must frequently remind foreign Communists that the slogans of "peace" mean for the enemy a relaxation of struggle, but never relaxation for the Communist.

In the field of international relations, the then Foreign Minister Shepilov reaffirmed the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence" at the Sixth Session of the USSR Supreme Soviet on 12 February 1957. At the same time he was careful to point out for the benefit of party members that:

"Peaceful coexistence does not mean a quiet life. As long as different social-political systems exist, contradictions between them are inevitable. Peaceful coexistence is a struggle--a political struggle, an economic struggle, an ideological struggle... We would be Marxists-Leninists no longer if we forgot the elementary laws of social life, the laws of class struggle."

Applying to national policies of Communist Government, the Kommunist article is an attack on certain European Communists, particularly some Poles, who were misled by the Chinese propaganda of "peaceful transition" enough to suggest that the use of force might not be necessary in the transformation of the satellite economies to socialism. The concept of peaceful transformation has not been attacked in Russian propaganda beamed to the outside world, of course. The attack was confined to the leading theoretical journal of the CPSU so that its thesis will be accepted by party members but may pass unnoticed by others. Thus the problem of conducting a "two-faced" policy has forced the CPSU to expose the Chinese claim to a "peaceful way" as a propaganda maneuver and to point out the force actually used against the Chinese bourgeoisie in drives against "counterrevolutionaries" and the "five-antis".

Attachment (Article from Kommunist)

March 1957